

1944

Box 25 October 31



Subject: Psychological Types in the Cultures of the Southwest  
by R. Benedict

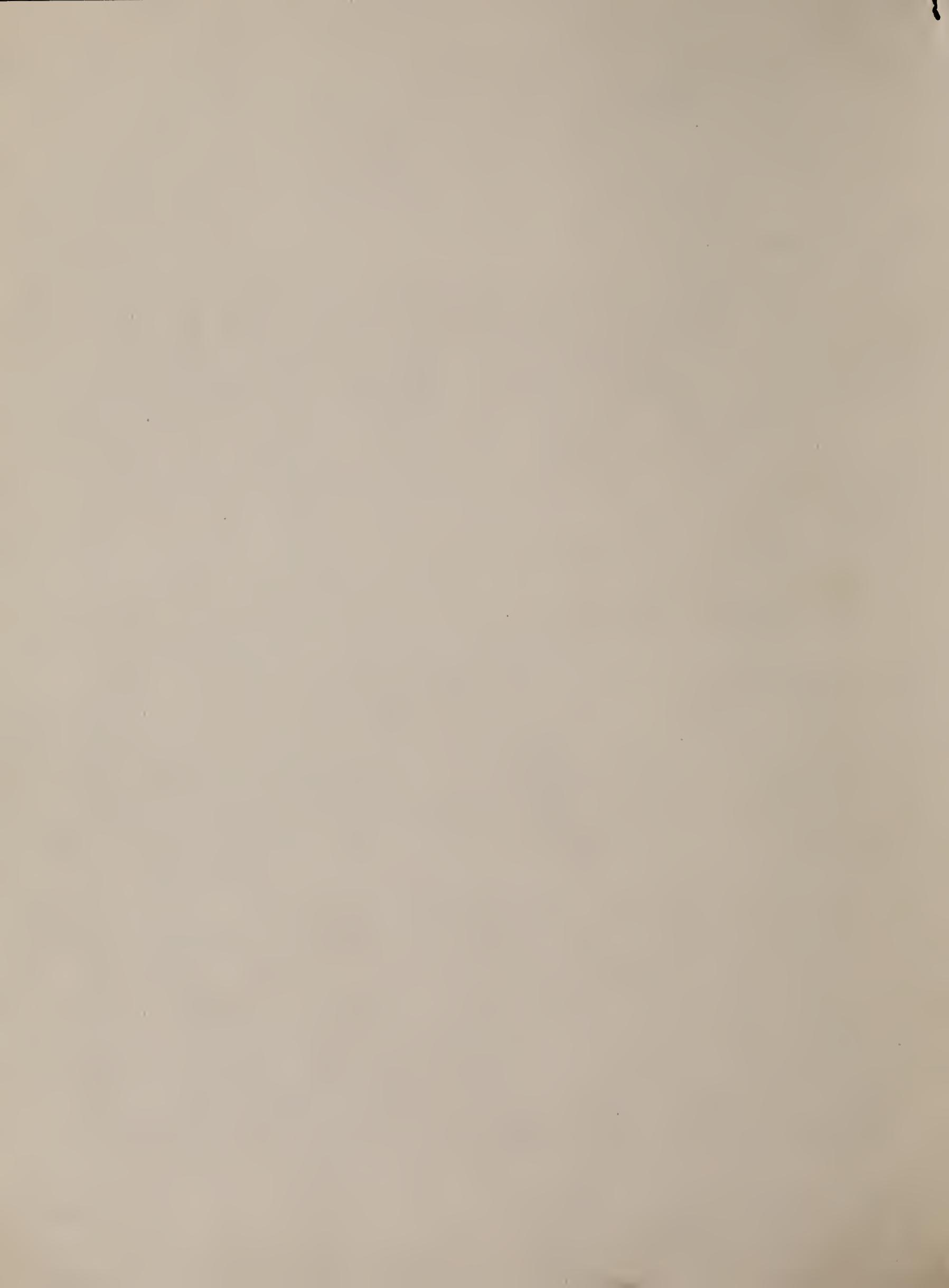
For: Methods of Cultural Anthropology.) It is my strong belief

By: R.S. MacNeish

Date: Jan. 21, 1944

I think you want this so let me begin by saying that the main point of this paper is to show how the methods of cultural anthropology can be applied to the study of the Pueblo Indians of the Southwest. The author, Ruth Benedict, believes that the major problems in the study of a particular people are: the making of an adequate descriptive statement of their culture and the understanding of cultural dynamics. I believe that Benedict would consider these general problems the social task of all of anthropology and particularly the group she has come to be part of. In this paper the problems are of a less general nature, for here she is attempting to discern why the Pueblo Indians of the Southwest are so strongly differentiated in their behavior from the surrounding groups. The key, she believes, should be found in their ritual activities which are so characteristic of their lives. However, a study of the ritual of the Pueblo and that of other peoples leads her to believe that it is something more fundamental than mere ritual that these cultures into different channels. The situation being that these formalized activities are often quite similar in form but as far as individual behavior is concerned, motivated by quite different drives. For example,

In attempting to account for this difference Benedict sets up hypotheses which she believes may solve the problem. She also gives a method for understanding a culture and its culture dynamics. Here, we see Benedict applying scientific methods to human relations.



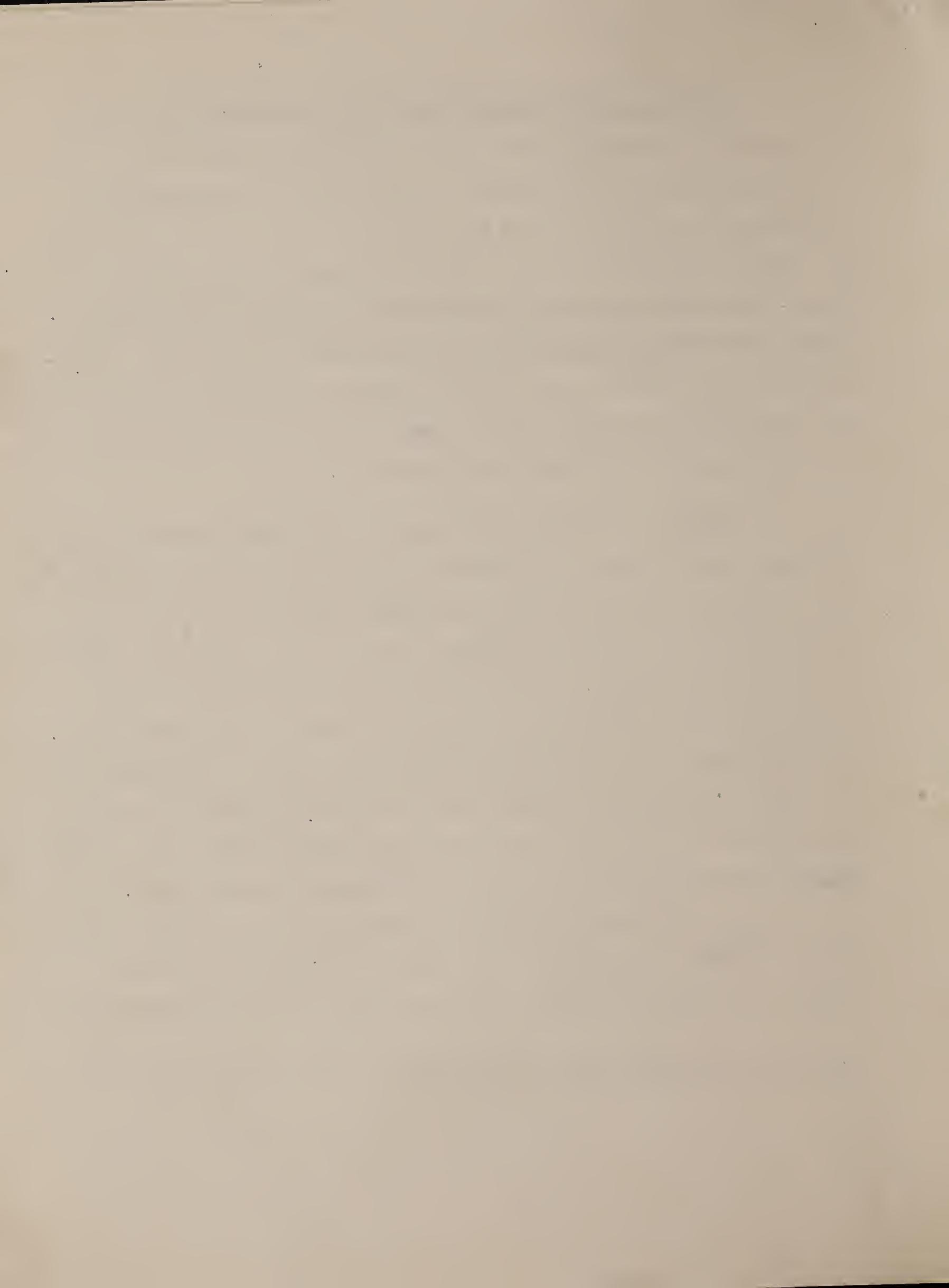
It appears that she has three major hypotheses. The first assumption is that every group will select certain traits and that these traits are integrated into a pattern or configuration. Secondly, the pattern and the selection of traits is controlled by an ethnus or psychological type which integrates them progressively. This last assumption, I might add, has often been used by Thomas and others and is nothing new conceptually. The final assumption is methodological, she believes these psychological types may be classified as existing between ~~two~~<sup>SP</sup> diametrically different ways of arriving at the values of existence'.

These two extreme psychological types are called Dionysian and Apollonian (this classification has been derived from Nietzsche). The Dionysian individual might be briefly described as an escapist whose most valued moments are found outside of the boundaries imposed upon him by his senses. He desires to reach psychological states by excesses that are above and beyond the ties of his everyday life. The Apollonian is the conservative type who sticks to the middle of the road. His greatest satisfaction is in being a stable individual who maintains control over any disruptive psychological state. These ~~two~~ psychological types [might be designated as ideal types.]

The practical application of Benedict's thesis might be summed ~~as this~~ thusly: the behavior the individual exhibits in various social situations determines the psychological type representative of

1. These assumptions were not discernible in this article so I took them from Benedict's latter works.

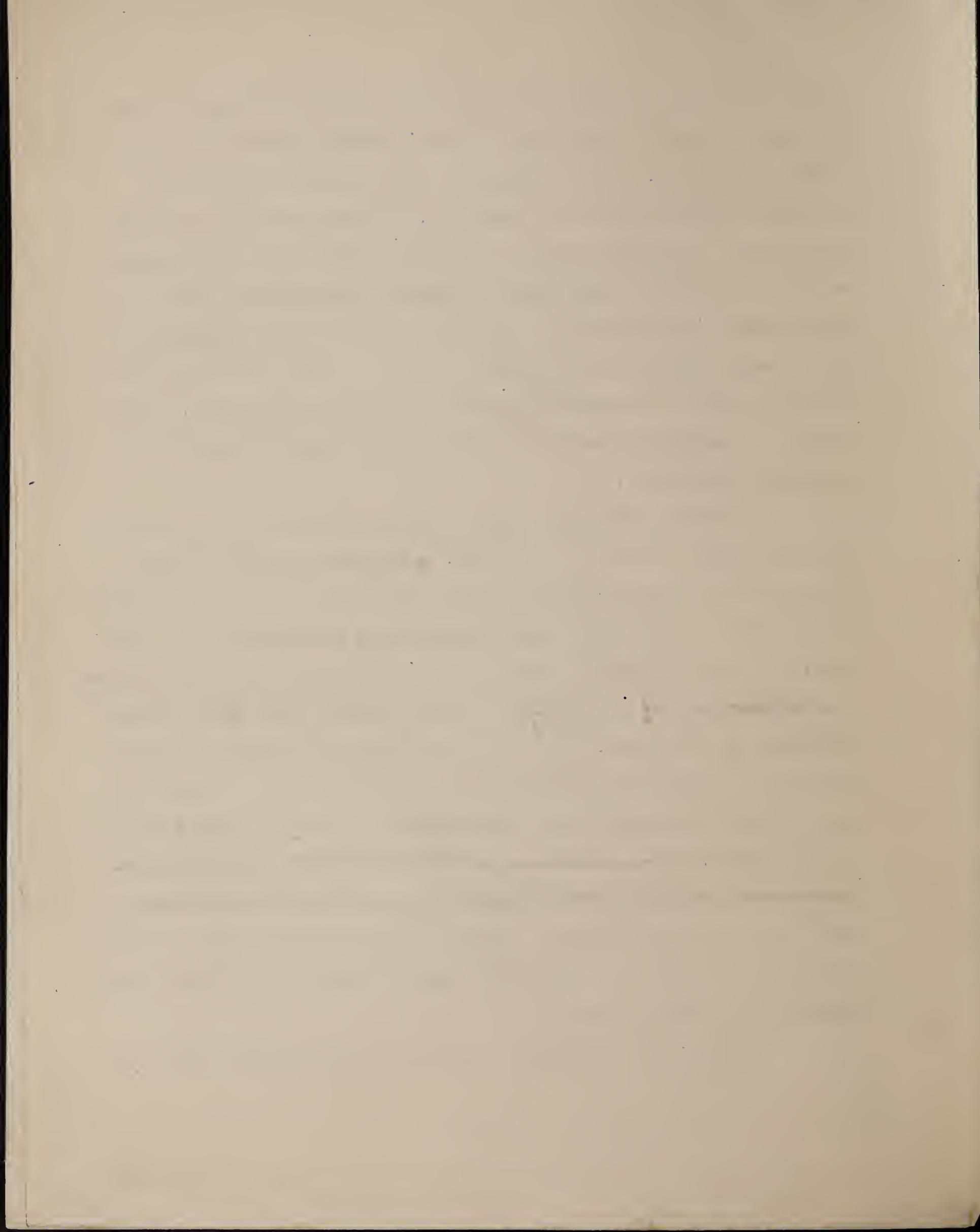
Tall 95.  
How you think about



of their culture. In this particular article she uses as an example the type of behaviour the Pueblo of the Southwest shows in various ritual activities. In all the cases which she cites the Pueblo exhibit a typical Apollonian behaviour. All the groups around the Pueblo show a Dionysian type of behaviour. Also, the traits adopted historically must be adaptable to the psychological type of that culture. For instance, the Pueblo never adopted the peyote cult though they were in contact with groups having this cult. The Dionysian Pima, a neighboring group, did take up this cult. In my opinion, the factual matter of this article seems to confirm her original assumption.

However, this particular method of determining these psychological types is open to criticism. Especially so since we are interested in anthropological methods and particularly the process employed in obtaining certain significant social facts. In the material under discussion and in all her latter articles the process of ~~where and how of~~ discerning these psychological types in a social structure is not clear. If we were to study the Eskimo who have a minimum of formalized activity ~~can~~ we expect to derive as easily our psychological type from behaviour in ritual, as in the case of the Pueblo? Also, in studies of modern society she derives her psychological types by observing behaviour in the economic system. What part of society should we study and under what should we study one part in preference to another? These questions I believe Benedict should say something about.

The second criticism would be of her statement that the

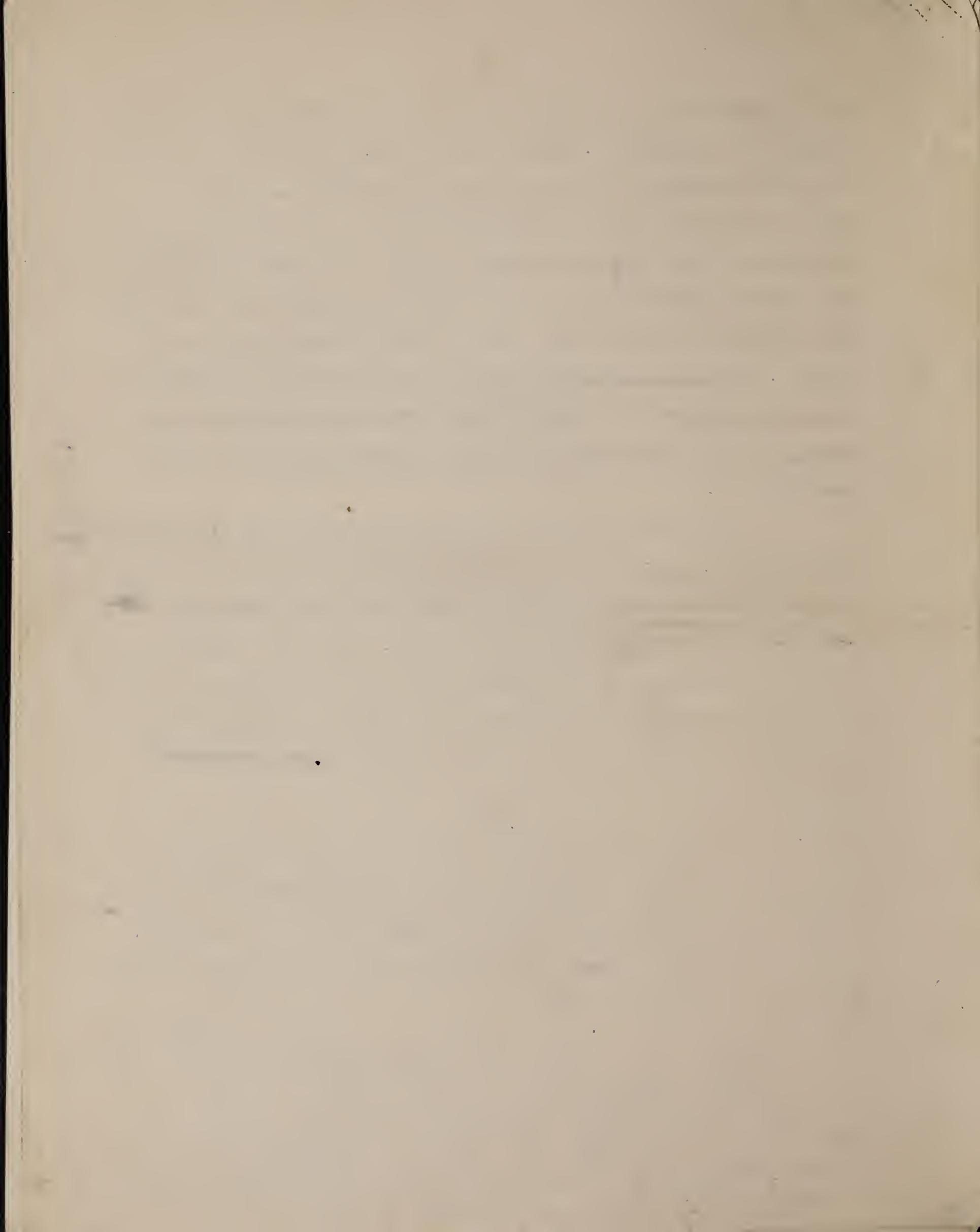


culture dynamics of a culture can best be understood by using her methods and assumption . In my opinion certain phenomna of culture of culture dynamics can not be seen by her process. Benedict's studies may give us excellent generalizations about acculturation but they will tell us little about the part of culture dynamics that involve the wider aspects of culture phenomna that deal with the totality of culture and 'laws of human behavoir and social change'. It appears that she defines culture dynamics as meaning acculturation which is both limited definition of the word and but a part of a larger phenomna which others have called culture dynamics.

The final criticism comes concerning her use of the psychological data. The inference through out the article that culture traits and the aquisition of new culture traits are governed by the ~~etness~~ psychological type in a culture. This is in direct opposition to the theory of the psychologists who maintain that behaviour and psychological types usually are reflections <sup>of</sup> and governed by the social and natural environmental situations ~~(etc etc etc)~~.

In conclusion let me say that Benedict's type of study will make a larger contribution to social psychology than to anthropology. Nevertheless her work will be of use to anthropologists and the outstanding aspect still remains the applying of scientific method to social data.

The population might well work if the Pueblo were to derive a new economic system or their social system be disrupted by calamitous condition would not the psychological pattern of their culture change.



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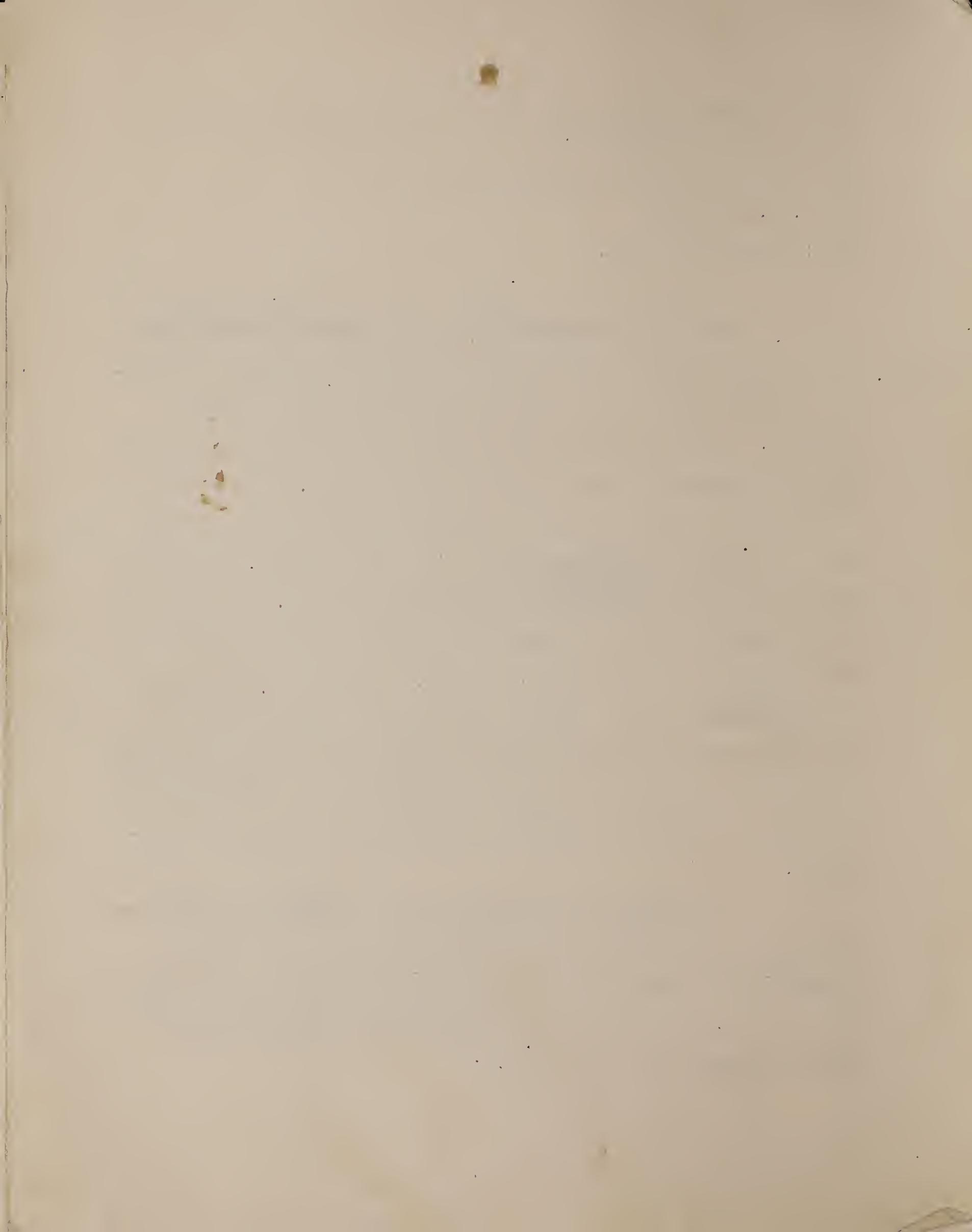
By: R. S. MacNeish

Date: January 21, 1944.

For ~~the main problems~~ the main

The ~~main problems~~ that Benedict feels to be involved in problems in the study of a particular people are: the making of a descriptive statement of a culture, and the understanding of cultural dynamics. I believe that Benedict would call the solving of these general problems the task of all of anthropology. In this particular paper the problems are of a less general nature, for here she is attempting to find out why the Pueblo Indians are strongly differentiated from that of the surrounding people. The key, she feels, should be found in their ritualized activities which are characteristic of their lives. However, a study of their ritual and ~~the ritual~~ <sup>that</sup> of other peoples leads her to believe that it is something deeper and more fundamental than mere ritual that guides these cultures, as these formalized activities are often quite similar, but as far as individual behavior is concerned, quite different.

In attempting to account for this ~~similarity~~ difference Benedict sets up hypotheses which she believes may solve her problem, and ~~she also~~ give a method for understanding a culture and its cultural dynamics. Here we see Benedict making an attempt to be a scientist about human relations.



It appears that she has 3 ~~major~~ <sup>major</sup> hypotheses.

However, let us get on to the assumptions. The first assumption is that every group will select certain traits and that these traits are integrated into a pattern or configuration.

Secondly These patterns and the selection of traits is controlled by some <sup>an</sup> ethnos or psychological type <sup>which</sup> ~~that~~ integrates them progressively.

These last assumptions, I might add, ~~were~~ often used by Thomas and others and ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> not exactly now. The final assumption is methodological, in that she believes ~~that~~ these psychological types may be classified <sup>existing between the</sup> in terms of ~~the~~ diametrically different ways <sup>of</sup> of arriving at the values of existence.

These two extreme psychological types are called Dionysian and Apollonian (this classification <sup>has been derived</sup> being taken from Nietzsche).

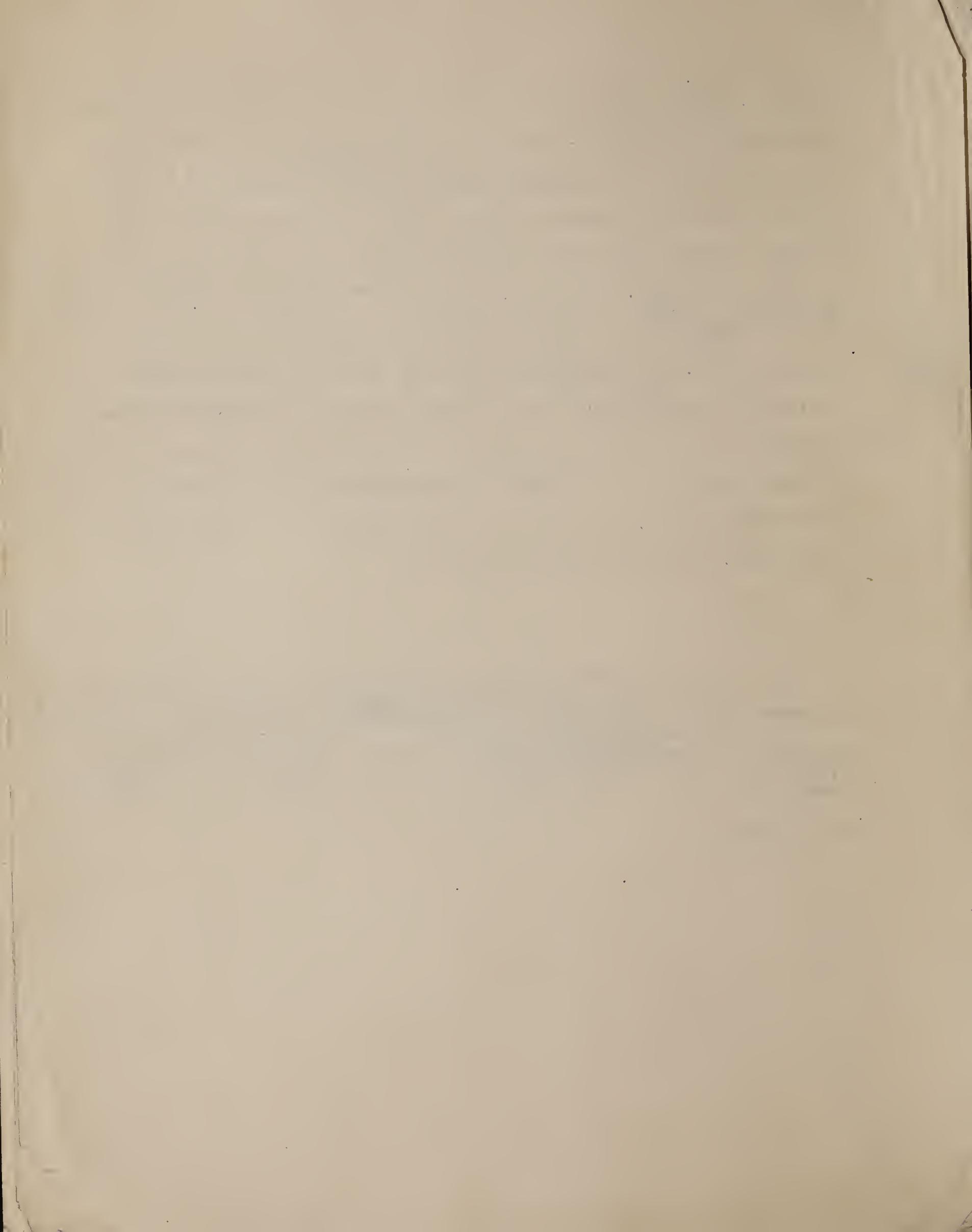
The Dionysian individual might be briefly described as an escapist whose most valued moments are found outside of the boundaries imposed <sup>upon</sup> on him by his senses <sup>and</sup> <sup>he</sup> desires to reach psychological states by excess that are above and beyond the ties of his everyday life. The Apollonian is the conservative type who sticks to <sup>him</sup> to the middle of the road, ~~and~~ <sup>whose</sup> greatest satisfaction is <sup>in</sup> being a ~~good~~ stable individual who maintains control over any disruptive psychological state. These two psychological types <sup>might be called</sup> <sup>designated as</sup> ideal types.

The practical application of Benedict's ideas would be how the individual acts in a particular society can be best described according to Benedict by seeing what psychological type <sup>of behavior</sup> <sup>the individual</sup> shows in various social situations. In this particular article it could be what type of behavior <sup>she uses as an example</sup> the Pueblo of the Southwest shows in various ritual activities.

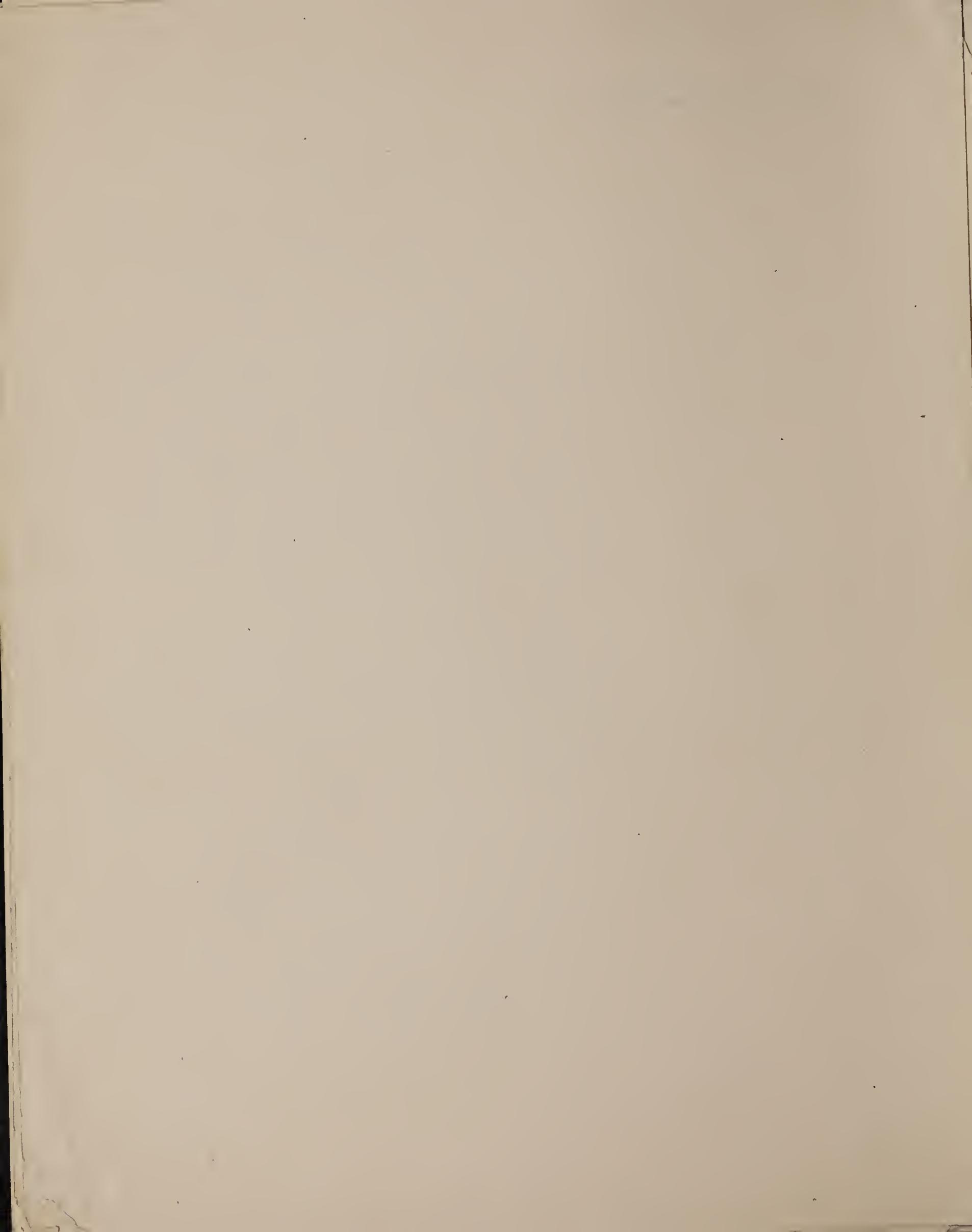


Leslie A. White does concerning the coorelation of social evolution or technological evolution. Benedict's studies may give us fine generalizations about the individual and society but they tell us very and part of culture dynamics that involve the wider aspects of cultural phenomena that deal with the totality of culture and "laws of human behavoir". It would almost seem that she defines cultural dynamics as meaning acculturation which is a narrow definition of the concept. The final criticism comes concerning her use of psychological data. It is inferred thru out the article that the culture traits and the aquisition of new culture traits are reflections and are governed by the ethnos or psychological type in a culture. This is direct opposition to the ideas of the psychologists who tell us that behavoir and psychological types usually are reflections of the social and environmental situations.

In conclusion let me say that Benedict's type of study ~~will make a large contribution to social psychology in spite of its limitations~~ will make certain contributions to social psychology and anthropology. However, ~~the finest thing about her studies still remains the attempt to be scientific with social data.~~ the outstanding aspect apply method



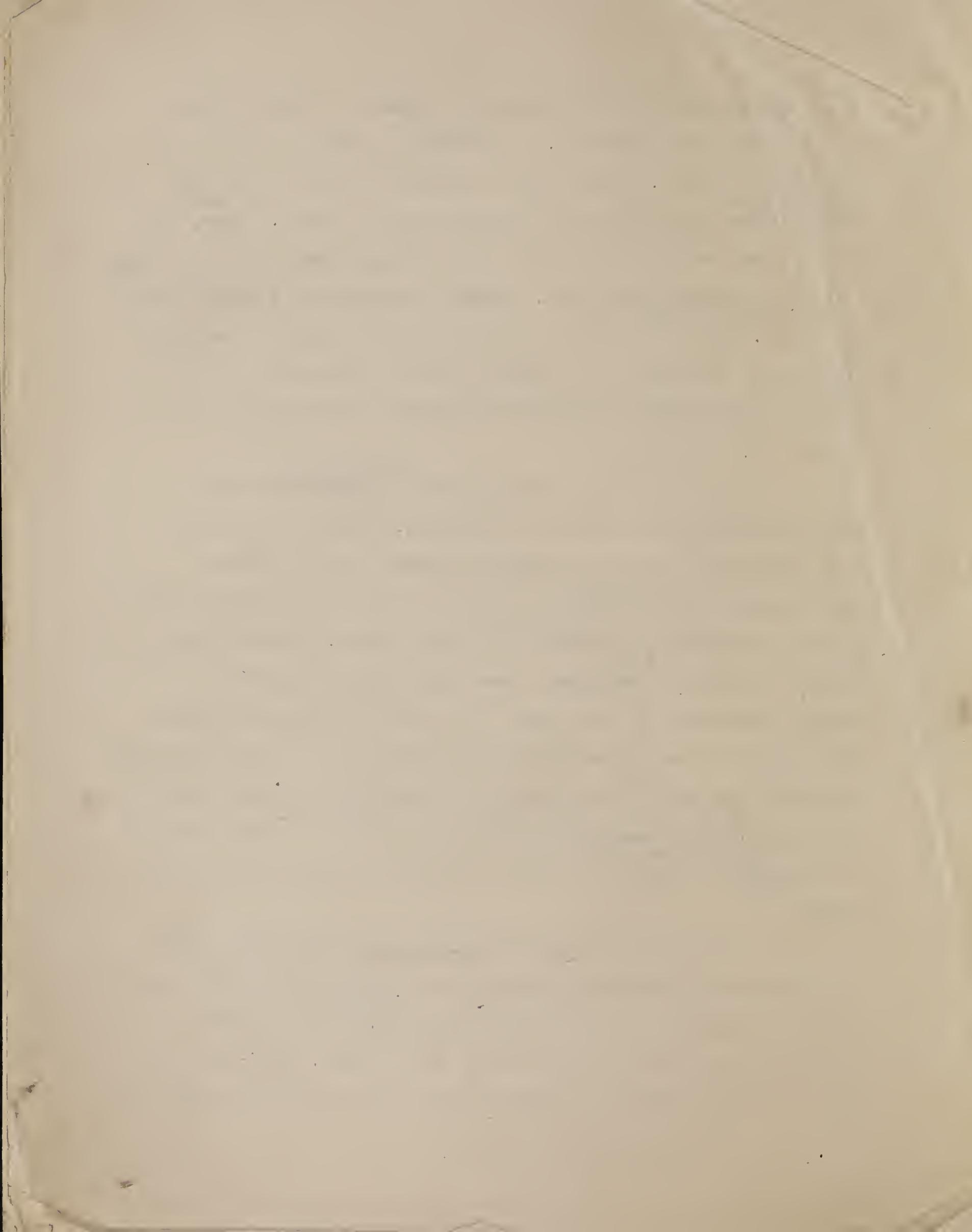
It appears that she has



It so happens that in all the cases she gives, the Pueblo shows typical Apollonian behavior. All others around the Pueblo show Dionysian behavior. Also, the traits adopted historically must be adaptable to conform with the psychological type of that culture. Thus, the Pueblo never adopted the peyote cult although they were in contact with groups having this cult. While the Dionysian Pima did adopt this cult. <sup>In my opinion</sup> The factual matter of this article seems to back up her original assumptions, as well as show the method by which these particular ~~that belong~~ to particular cultures may be discovered.

However, this particular method ~~finding out~~ <sup>of determining</sup> these psychological types is open to criticism. Especially so since I am interested in anthropological methods and particularly the processes ~~that is used~~ employed in getting certain significant social facts. In Benedict's article and all her latter articles the process of where to look for these psychological types in a social structure is not clear. If we were to study the Eskimo who have a minimum of formalized activity can we expect to derive as easily our psychological type from behavior in ritual as from the pueblo? <sup>Also, in studies of modern society she derives her psychological type by asking the economic system</sup> If we can not then what part of the society should we study? These questions I believe Benedict should say something about.

The second criticism would be of her statement that a description of a culture and culture dynamics can best be understood by using her methods and assumptions. Certain phenomena of culture dynamics can not be seen by her process. How could Benedict arrive at conclusions about culture dynamics of the type that



[DRAFT of  
Psychological  
types in the selves of the student  
by Macnush]

